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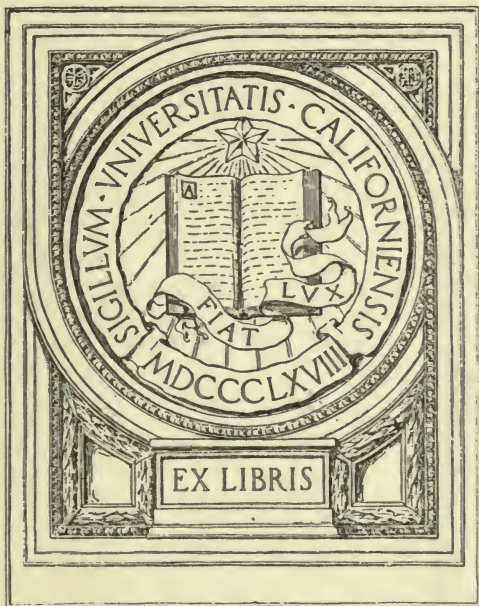
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THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

EDWARD A. BRACKETT

L. S. D. 1820
May 8/20

IN MEMORIAM
Charles Josselyn.



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Read page 69

The World We Live In

BY

EDWARD A. BRACKETT

AUTHOR OF "MATERIALIZED APPARITIONS"

"MY HOUSE," ETC.

me
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In memoriam
Chas. Josselyn

1911

To my brother, WALTER M. BRACKETT, with whom I have journeyed in this life for more than three-quarters of a century, whose independent thought and action has never marred the affection between us, this little book is dedicated.

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Fear not the gloom, 'tis but a shroud
That veils the light, a passing cloud
That trails and drifts and drops its rain ;
The parched earth drinks and laughs again.
What is for thee accept, retain —
'Tis thine, for thee all else is vain.

PREFACE

THIS little book is written at the close of my eighty-fourth year, at a time when laboring under great exhaustion, the result of overwork in other directions.

I make no apology for its defects and claim nothing for its possible merits. I had something to say, and, in my own way, have said it.

In my early days I became interested in the study of mesmerism, then practically unknown in this country. Many of my experiments were made in company with Wm. H. Channing, the inventor of the fire-alarm.

From the intensity of my nature and a daring due to ignorance, I carried these experiments, probably, further than any one else. Several times I pushed my subjects where neither pulse nor breath was discernible, requiring all my exertions and presence of mind to restore them to their normal state.

It was during these experiments that I discovered the close relation between mesmeric sleep and what we call death, and to me it gave unmistakable evidence of another life.

My subsequent long investigation of what is called mediumship, which is only a form of mesmerism, in no wise changed the conclusions I had reached.

Had time permitted, this little book could have been swelled into a large volume. The position taken in regard to supposed scientific conclusions could have been sustained by unanswerable facts. The theory of evolution and transformation of species, generally attributed to Darwin, appears to have been promulgated thousands of years before the publication of his book. From the initiation of the Neophytes into the orders of the Hindu religion, we make the following extract :

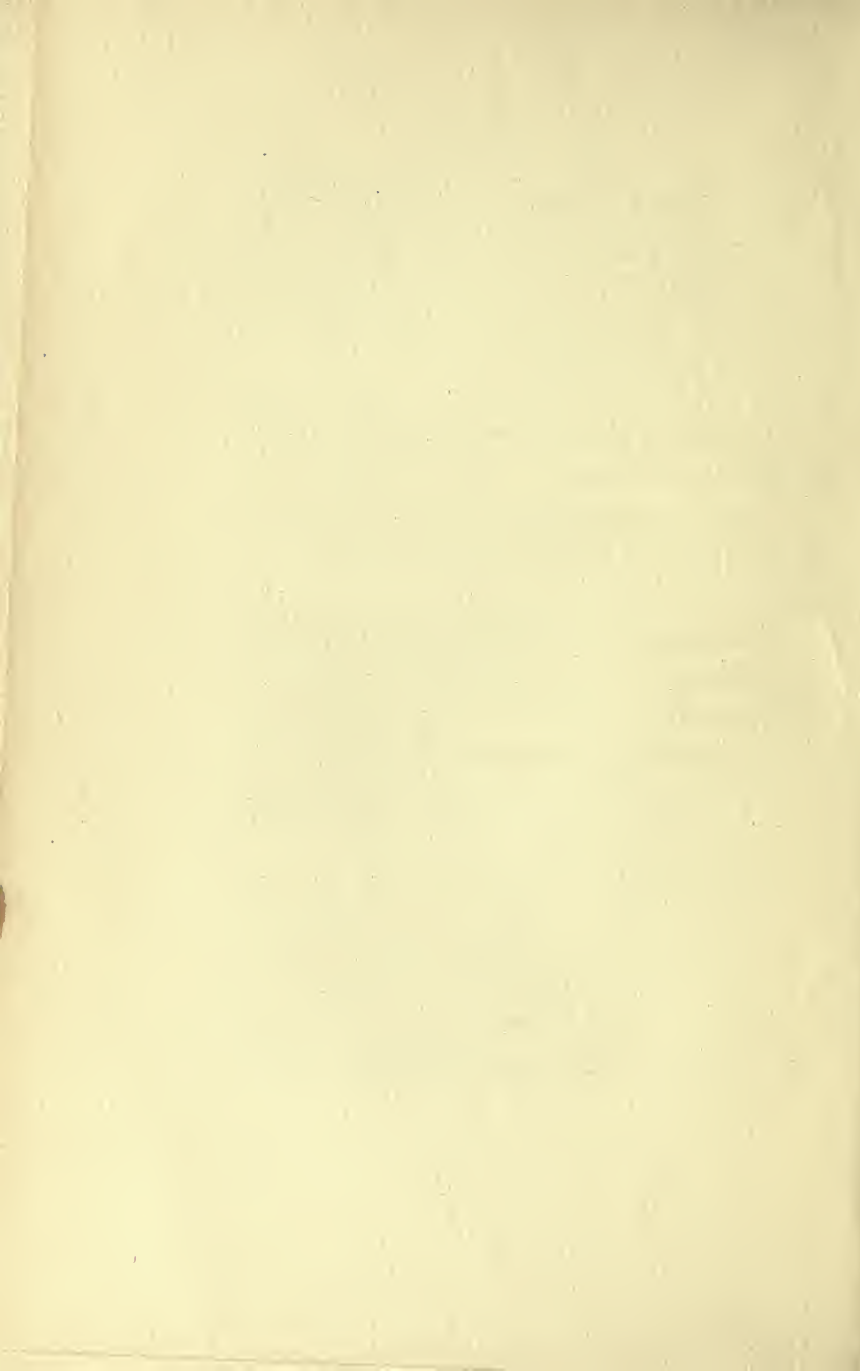
“ He should reflect that the vital spirit, after leaving the GREAT ALL, undergoes ten thousand million transformations before clothing itself with the human form.”

Of the importance of a true religious feeling of our relations to the Divine Mind there can be no question. It is the unfortunate dogmas and speculations, the mummery of theatrical forms and ceremonies that tend to bring it into disrepute.

If we bear in mind that all these dogmas and ceremonies are taken from the Jewish, Egyptian and Hindu religions, we can realize how far out of place they are in the pure teachings of Christianity.

Every religious organization that has gained a foothold with mankind originated in spiritual manifestations. The diversion and degradation from their origin were due to egotistical leaders who sought to control the common people, producing a mental slavery destructive to individual thought and action.

The statements of Arthur Burleigh may have no standing with scientists. They are given from memory and are necessarily imperfect. Nevertheless they are the logical outcome of intuitions and aspirations that pervade the whole world.



There is no past. The future lies,
A blinding mist, before our eyes.
No footprints mark the unseen trail
That leads us down the shadowy vale.

Still on we press. With hopes and fears
We watch the coming of the years,
And here and there, thro' rifts between
Some parting cloud, the light is seen.



INTRODUCTION

IF you have swamped your individuality in the habits and customs of a sectarian life, you will probably find yourself dominated by inherited ideas — vagabonds that have come down from a barbarous age. They have taken possession of your intellect, blinding your intuitions. Whether you like them or not you cannot annihilate them. You may try to kick them out and think for a time that you are rid of them, but, like Rip Van Winkle, they return, not, however, in rags, but dressed in new garments, labelled "Higher Criticism." Inwardly they have not changed. Under all clanks the cloven foot. Mentally you have become their slave. They distort your reason, play fantastic tricks with your imagination, until you are unable to distinguish between the real and the unreal things of life. Without being aware of it

you have become a persistent liar, asserting, defending as facts things which you do not and cannot possibly know.

Enveloped in this mirage, this phosphorescent decay of unsavory legends, you lose all appreciation of your true character.

If, by any circumstance, you are so fortunate as to escape this bondage, in the opinion of the majority you are nothing but a crank, subject to the despotism of public opinion against which so few have the backbone to stand up and be counted.

The evolutionists, who have determined with so much confidence the time it took to develop man on this planet, have here an opportunity to calculate how long it will be ere he ceases to drag after him the rotten remains of an uncivilized age.

It is a question how far we have advanced in ethical attainments beyond the savage. We have accepted many of his gloomy, irresponsible religious ideas without retaining his simplicity and love of nature.

There is no greater crime against humanity than that of poisoning the life of a child with false ideas. His young mind, rich with joyous expectations of a new life, becomes hopelessly clouded. Strangely in contrast with this is the truthful saying of the "Master," "Except ye become as little children ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of Heaven." No greater compliment can be paid you than that you are childlike, simple, outspoken, not pretending to be aught save what you are.

Instead of this you look outward, upward, yearning for the unattainable, unconscious of the marvellous creations everywhere springing up around you; forgetting that he who walks with averted gaze should know the ground he treads.

All the fanciful, imaginary, unreal ideas simply lull you into a drowsy condition, and, like the lotus eaters, you drift away from the duties, realities and affections of life. They are so much hindrance to the development of true character.

Is life so poor that you need borrow on unlimited credit that of which you cannot make any practical use? What possible difference can it be to you here whether, in the other life, you wear fig leaves, cotton garments, or nothing at all? You were not consulted about these things on coming into this life and will not be on going into the other.

The highest quality of outward expression depends upon a healthy, robust organization and the perfection of that intermediate body which unites spirit and matter. This body can detach itself from the outward form but never from the spirit.

In my long and exhaustive study of mesmerism I demonstrated to my entire satisfaction the existence of such a body. I care not what you call it, it is there just the same, and what is known as death is nothing more nor less than the breaking of the connection between it and the outward body.

The tendency of what we call education is largely toward exalting the intellect over

Spiritual
body
outward
body

character, depriving us of that spontaneity of thought and action through which alone we can progress. Why should we drag along with us that which has been but is not? "Let the dead past bury its dead."

There is no idea, however absurd, that does not find a lodgment in some one's brain.

The first glow of morning is the promise of to-day, not yesterday nor to-morrow. Instinctively we shrink from those immodest persons who fain would have us believe that they have developed along the lines of St. Cecilia's cherubs, hypocritically denying their material relations and claiming to have arisen above their animal natures, ignoring everything to which they owe their existence in this world, and without which earth would become a desolation, and, by implication, arraigning the Divine Intelligence for creating us as we are.

Do you for a moment suppose that it was intended by the Creator that there should be a conflict between the spirit and the body through which it expresses itself?

Fortunately our puny efforts to reform the world meet with no response. Nature's laws require neither judge nor jury. They execute themselves.

There is nothing prosaic or commonplace in this world unless, through our lack of appreciation, we make it so. In the fulness and richness of our natures, in that receptivity of mind which ought always to abide with us, we instinctively turn to the marvellous beauty of the world and the Divine Intelligence that everywhere pervades it. Freed from the baffling influences of intellectual disease the inspiration of a true life comes to us as freely as the air we breathe.

THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

From out the unseen world there springs
In wondrous beauty, all living things.
A countless host whose onward trend
Is through all time. Who knows the end ?

Who comprehends the mighty force
That swung the planets on their course,
And through the realms of endless space
Still guides and holds them in their place ?

Who knows the time they first begun
Their ceaseless journey round the sun,
Or aught of that sidereal sweep
That bears them through the boundless deep ?

Still swells the tide, within, without.
Whether we fear, or hope, or doubt,
Resistless rolls the mighty flow
Of life. The end — ah, who can know ?

THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

To be in close sympathy with Nature ; to see and realize her wonderful beauty ; to be at oneness with her marvellous manifestations, is the highest possible attainment. Her laws are few and simple, but to their requirements she demands unqualified allegiance, abating not one iota of her just claims. No matter how wise you think you are, you cannot evade her ; in the end she compels you to surrender. She stints nothing, scattering her favors everywhere with a bountiful hand, filling the earth with the glory of her presence.

Gentle as the evening wind that whispers through the pines she speaks to those who can commune with her.

Of all her varied productions, man alone seems to rebel against her. Not through his affections nor his true character, but through his intellect, which is irresponsible and devoid of moral element.

These mental activities are due to a self-conceit that pretends to know what cannot be known. The world has been deluged with speculations and theories creating a delusive mirage that floats through our mental atmosphere.

Many of these theories are short-lived, dying in infancy—the abortive efforts of weak minds. The trail of human progress is strewn with the skeletons of exploded theories. So long as they stood alone they were comparatively harmless, but when they masqueraded in borrowed garments, attaching themselves to sectarian dogmas, they became responsible for much that we call crime.

Of this character is the Mosaic theory of the creation of the world. For thousands of years it was the prevailing belief of both Jews and Christians, and to call it in question was heresy punishable by torture or death.

When Science by its slow accumulation of facts sapped and undermined it, the whole structure fell to pieces. Its ruins still loom on the horizon of the past,—a monument of intellectual folly.

Science proved by unassailable facts that the world could not have been created in six days; that if it were ever created it must have been millions of years before man appeared on its surface.

Scientists, opposed and sometimes persecuted by the believers in old theology, naturally gravitated to the other extreme, and their efforts have been, so far as possible, to discredit all belief in a divine creation.

It is to their credit that they emancipated themselves from all sectarian dogmas and the follies and superstitions of the age; that, regardless of opposition, they stood manfully in the defence of what they believed to be true.

That they should have developed something of that tyranny from which they had escaped, and committed follies of their own, was to be expected. Nor is it to be wondered at that, in the pursuit of prosaic facts, they should sometimes have been led into the free play of intellectual and imaginative thought.

The mistake has been that the public has not discriminated between theory and fact. The search after the unknown is like the game of blind-man's buff,—the chances are that the wrong fellow is caught.

The void created by the destruction of the Mosaic fable was quickly filled.

Scientists, not satisfied with the splendid work they had done, attempted to form a theory of their own.

Away back in the ages of which no possible record can be known, there existed a great fire-mist, extending beyond the farthest orbit of our system. This fire-mist gradually condensed into what is known as our sun. In its gaseous and fluidic state, in consequence of its rotary motion, it threw off a series of rings, which in time became planets circulating around the sun. Each successive ring was smaller than the previous one. Each was so adjusted by the amount of matter it contained that no opposing attraction could turn it out of its course.

Mercury was the last successful effort in propagating planets. The sun is growing old and no more babies can be expected from her. There is no room for them.

This interesting theory may contain some truth, but as an explanation of the creation it is a failure,—at best, a torso, without head, arms or legs. It does not tell what created this fire-mist, of what it was composed, what caused it to take fire, what fed the fire, how or why it happened to be in that place at that time.

What caused it to gravitate and form the sun? What caused the rotary motion which caused it to throw off these rings that gravitated into planets? What gave them their rotary motion and sent them whirling around the sun?

To all these questions Science makes no satisfactory reply.

Is there not in all these wonderful manifestations evidence of an invisible intelligence that builds and controls everything?

Having disposed of sun and planets, Scientists next endeavored to account for life on this earth. The planet was still a

great ball of incandescent matter rolling through space. Slowly it began to cool off and form a crust on its surface. The rains from the atmosphere fell upon it, the water was converted into steam, rose and fell again, and by constant repetition assisted in carrying off the heat. No effort was made to account for this atmosphere or of the water that now covers four-fifths of the globe.

Clouds and rain are due to particles of dust floating in the air, which gather the moisture, and the supposed character of earth's surface at that time would make it improbable that any such condition could have existed.

It was claimed that the earth in cooling was shrinking, growing smaller. It now appears that the reverse is true; that "its bulk is increasing from age to age by meteoric stones and shooting stars that constantly fall upon it, more than one

hundred thousand millions per annum." It is probable that the sun and all the planets receive similar contributions.

Such constant fertilization is enough to compensate for any loss of magnetic forces that might occur. It assures the continuation of what we call material life through all time.

As the harmony of the universe depends upon its relative proportions this constant growth may in time lead to a change in the orbits.

If we were disposed to formulate a theory of world building, — which we are not, — we might suggest that the sun and planets, starting from a small vortex, may have been built up by the aggregation of particles which through the ages have been and are now falling upon them, sufficient to account for their present proportions; and this suggestion gathers strength from the fact that everything of which

we have any knowledge appears to have started from small beginnings. The internal heat may be due to the immense pressure exerted by gravitation.

Light and heat are necessary to sustain material life. Scientists found this in the radiation from the sun. From its immense size it had not cooled off. It was still in an incandescent state, seething, boiling, sending off vast flames of burning hydrogen. They endeavored to calculate the intensity of its heat, the relative proportion each planet received, and last, but not least, how long it would take for it to be consumed, leaving the planets in total darkness, covered with ice, dead worlds whirling through space.

No one need put on ascension robes or lower the price of real-estate in consequence of this sublime prediction.

The higher we ascend in our atmosphere the colder it grows. On the tops of

high mountains are perpetual snow and ice. With the same ratio of decreasing heat, at the verge of our atmosphere there must be intense cold and darkness.

There lie between us and the sun more than ninety-two million miles of this cold. No heat that the sun could generate would radiate through one thousandth part of this immense area.

Heat and light are not due to radiation, but to magnetic emanations passing through atmosphere, and the amount of heat and light depends upon the density or rarity of that atmosphere.

According to the theory of evolution, the ocean, in consequence of its restless character, its high winds and waves breaking on the shore, grinding the rocks to powder, was gradually fitted to sustain the lowest form of life. This made its appearance in jelly-like seaweed, and clustering over this were millions of microbes,

invisible to the naked eye, but containing in themselves "the potency and possibility of all that is or has been."

Through this wonderful theory of evolution they continued to develop one form above another until, tired of their old home, some of them crawled out of the sea on to the land, where, through continued evolution of species and the survival of the fittest, they reached a point where one of them from walking on all fours stood erect, a man,—in his own conceit "lord of the fowl and the brute."

To-day, he is at the head of our boasted civilization, rolling in wealth,—trying to see how far above his ancestry he can rise without falling.

And what of his companion,—too often his slave, the plaything of his leisure hours, robed in silks, bedecked with pearls and diamonds, flaunting her fancied superiority in the face of common humanity?

What of her? Only an improved microbe. For ages she lay under the sea, till she became a clam,* and in the long ages that followed, a slimy monster. Step by step she climbed in search of her mate.

Her nearest relatives are monkeys. Are there still lingering inherited traits that crop out in the fantastic follies of fashionable life?

Glance back over the long line of descent. Is there anything there to build up ancestral pride? If man was evolved from the monkey, it does not appear in some things to be much of an evolution.

If this theory of evolution means anything, it means the descent of man through all the lower forms of animal life. It sweeps away with the force of an avalanche every vestige of ancestral pride, and leaves man nothing but an improved

* The motto of the elder Darwin — "Everything from a clam."

monkey. Beyond this scientists do not go. They simply say that the existence of spirit is not proven, and by implication does not exist.

Scientists who had contributed so much to the knowledge of mankind, who had weighed the earth as in a balance, like young robins opened their mouths and swallowed this theory with all its possibilities, without the slightest protest. No gullibility which led to the acceptance of religious superstition could surpass this credulity.

Scientific conclusions, unless sustained by the accumulation of unanswerable facts, are worthless. If these theories of evolution are true, it must have been in progress for millions of years and still operative, and among the many living forms some evidence of the transition should be visible. But of all the hundreds of species that for ages have been

under close observation not a single instance of such a change has been seen. The forms and habits of birds and animals may to some extent be changed by culture and favorable conditions, but in no case can the dividing line between species be passed. We may, in some instances, by force, not inclination, debase closely allied species, such as the horse and the ass, but Nature abhors the bantling and forbids further propagation.

Evolution of species is a theory without any living evidence to sustain it,—an abortive effort to explain the unknowable by methods that do not explain,—to substitute a blind force in the place of divine intelligence.

Closely following on the heels of evolution of species came the “survival of the fittest.” It is astonishing with what alacrity this flippant expression swept over the civilized world. Possibly, it

appealed to our vanity, for we who are still alive are a survival of the fittest, those who died early were not fit to live.

Here, again, as in the evolution of species, there is no evidence to sustain the theory. On the contrary, it is the survival of the *most favored*. Everywhere nature attests this truth. The lines of progress are always along the most favorable conditions. It is the scrawny, ungainly brute that overpowers the higher and more finely organized forms. When the wolves were driven out of Maine, the woods became full of deer. A few rabbits dropped in Australia increased and overran the country, for they had no enemies.

If you ask the farmer about his crops, he will tell you that he plows the ground, manures it, plants his corn and carefully keeps down the weeds so that nothing will interfere with its growth. If you tell him that the scientific way is to trust to

natural selection and the survival of the fittest, he would tell you that there would be nothing but weeds. If he is at all irritable and lacking in respect for high authority, he may possibly tell you that there is no fool like a scientific fool.

It was opportunity that made Lincoln president when great executive ability was required. It was opportunity that enabled Grant to control the largest army, over the widest extent of territory, ever controlled by one man. The world is full of great men and women kept in the background from lack of opportunity.

Underlying these comparatively harmless theories of the creation of the world and the evolution of the species, there has existed through all ages a mental disease accountable for much crime and great suffering. The cause of that disease (the microbes that are responsible for it) is still open to investigation.

Scientists have not yet settled the question whether microbes cause disease or are the result of disease.

In the infinitesimal microbe the passions may be as strong as in the higher forms, and these microbes may be avenging themselves on those who so unceremoniously left them.

The primitive savage in his ignorance attributed everything to a good or a bad spirit. Brave in war or in the pursuit of game, before these imaginary deities he became the most abject coward. To appease their wrath or gain their favor he conceived the idea of the sacrifice of innocent life, and in some cases human beings were substituted for animals.

This sacrifice was a leading feature in the Jewish religion. It was claimed that the smell of burnt offerings was a savory odor in the nostrils of Jehovah.

Later, in a somewhat modified form, Christians adopted the same idea.

Christ was offered up to appease the wrath of the Father. He was supposed to have taken upon himself the sins of the world, to have died to save sinners, Without this vicarious atonement no one could reach Heaven.

It seems strange that any one who understands human life, its individualities and its responsibilities, could have accepted any such idea. No one can assume the sins of another. Each one is responsible for his own errors. It is in vain that he pleads that some one else has paid the penalty.

Hand in hand with the theory of sacrifice came the idea of the debasement of the human body, that it was vile, the child of the Devil. All evils were attributed to the sins of the flesh and it was our duty to cripple it, to inflict upon it all sorts of

penance, that by so doing we should exalt our souls and please God.

Men inflicted upon themselves horrible tortures. Some made long pilgrimages to shrines over roads strewn with bodies of those who had perished by the way. Some spent their lives in prayer. Others, disgusted with the world, retired to caves where they passed their lives in self-abasement, stretching out their skinny hands to every passer-by for alms. Some, dressed in uncouth garments, wandered up and down the land begging. Some turned monks, retiring to monasteries where they were supposed to live holy, austere lives.

Woman, owing to her more sensitive nature, her higher and finer organization, sometimes hysterical and under hypnotic influences, fled to convents. What takes place within these walls the world does not know. They are the only institutions not open to the public, and over which

the government has no supervision. They exist here under that priceless boon, the right to think and do pretty much as we please so long as we claim that it is our religion.

Some of the devotees of these unfortunate institutions appear in public on the streets. The listless tread, the thin pale faces, the unmistakable gloom of decay show plainly that Nature is demanding the penalty for the violation of her laws.

In the onward march of human progress, it is essential that every one should, so far as possible, maintain a healthy body and a sound mind. If it is good for any class of persons to immolate themselves in this way, it is good for all, and the universal acceptance of such a life would speedily end the human race.

How strange, how sad this debasement, this degradation of woman, who, in the

fulness of her nature, in her true individuality, in her noble aspirations, in the glory and splendor of her organization, is the highest embodiment of life!

To degrade her, to deprive her of her just inheritance is a crime against humanity and the infinite intelligence that created her.

Somewhat modified and with lessening force, the sectarian theories of the past still permeate the civilization of to-day. Most of the churches still cling to old and exploded dogmas. There is a refined egotism and exclusiveness in their organization.

Many of them do not fraternize with each other, much less the outside world.

The modest pastor claims to be the shepherd of his flock. He gathers his sheep into his fold, henceforth they are his slaves. They dare not reason or call in question anything that pertains to their

creed. In his efforts to define the importance of church life and the dividing line between it and the outside world, he makes much of the parable of the sheep and the goats.

Unfortunately for the parable, the goat is the higher organized animal. He is independent and aggressive and there is no wool growing over his eyes to prevent his seeing that a free, open life is better than a sheep-pen.

Based on old and doubtful traditions, Christians cherish a belief in a future life.

And what a life it is! Instead of being a continuation of this, with all its humanity, its joys and endearments, it is "the eternal city" whose streets are paved with gold, the great white throne around which the saints sing hallelujahs forever, while over its battlements gleam the fires of Hell.

The answer to all these intellectual

vagaries is that matter is eternal, you cannot destroy one particle of it; that everything in this world is a direct emanation from the Divine Intelligence. Spirit cannot express itself except through matter. The polarity between spirit and matter exists everywhere, even in the most minute particle.

All matter, however solid, was once in an invisible, gaseous state and can be again resolved into its original condition. Whether visible or invisible it is still matter.

Your body is as sacred as your spirit and all theorizing or speculation about sacrificing it or any part of it is the worst possible mental disease. So long as you live in this world there can be no divorce from it, no dividing line between the two.

You cannot debase the one without degrading the other.

You need not trouble yourself as to your spirituality. The talk about it is largely a meaningless fad. Deep down in your heart, welling up through your daily life, expressed in love and kindness to others, is all the spirituality you need in this world.

Take care of your body and your spirit will take care of itself. Your mental sufferings are the result of deflected spiritual forces through an imperfect body. The polarity between spirit and body is at fault.

There is no expressed intelligence without organization and no organization outside of matter. If you destroy my visible body I can no longer express myself through it.

Both my visible and my invisible body come under the universal law of spirit expressing itself through matter.

Because I recognize the equality of matter and spirit — the necessity of a material

existence — am I a materialist? I answer yes and no. It requires both matter and spirit to constitute an organized intelligent being. Otherwise there can be no conscious individual existence.

I am not trying to build up any new-fangled theory. I simply announce what seems to be the only reasonable ground on which a claim to a continued existence after death can be maintained, — the equality of spirit and matter. Death drops the husk, but that intermediate material body which united the two still adheres to the spirit. The cleavage in no way impairs the conscious individual organization.

The evolution of matter — and there is no other evolution — is always in the direction of the invisible, toward that condition which enables the spirit to more freely express itself.

Those who have carefully studied the phenomena of mesmerism understand that

in the trance state the connection between the inner organization of the subject and its outer body is, for the time being, either partially or wholly suspended, and that the physical body is held in abeyance by the magnetic control of the mesmerizer. Injuries inflicted on the mesmerized subject are not recognized, but if applied to the mesmerizer the entranced subject instantly responds to it, the same as if applied to the subject in its normal state.

In complete trance, if the mesmerizer should be instantly killed, the entranced person might not regain the control of his body and a double tragedy would ensue.

It is to be observed that the spirit of the entranced subject, in relation to its own body, is precisely what it would be in what we call death. Its connection with the outer world is, for the time, broken, and, except under certain conditions, it can

no longer manifest itself to our outward senses.

The American branch of the Society of Psychical Research, in its blundering after evidence of another life, appears to have entirely overlooked this important fact.

Mesmerism is not only an evidence of continued life after death, it also opens the door to unlimited knowledge.

To those who are interested in this subject, who are naturally fitted for such investigation, whose minds are not distracted by preconceived ideas, it becomes a most absorbing study, opening new avenues to knowledge not obtainable in any other way.

It is, however, a sensitive phenomenon, requiring perfect freedom of action. The moment we try to force our personality on it, or in any way interfere with its spontaneity, it becomes deflected, elusive and

utterly valueless to the investigator. It is the most far-reaching manifestation connected with life, pervading everything, the connecting link between all forms. Without it we could have no consciousness of anything, no perception of individuality, of the affections, of character or relations to another state of existence. There is no difference between it and trance mediumship except that in the latter case the operator, instead of being on this side of life, is on the other, holding control of the medium's body, the same as the mesmerist holds it here.

The apparent increase in force and clearness of spiritual expression is always due to the evolution of matter toward the invisible.

Mesmerism has been known for ages among Oriental nations, but is comparatively new in Europe and in this country, where it has more or less become the

plaything of itinerant lecturers and, under the name of hypnotism, the folly of pseudo-scientists. No one has yet appeared broad enough to comprehend its true character.

No matter what theories or speculations may be put forth, this truth remains, whether in this world or the invisible world, the existence of matter is necessary to the expression of conscious individual life.

From the theories of scientists and gloomy speculations of decaying theology we turn to the all-pervading manifestations of divine nature.

We wander through the fields and forest, linger beneath the overhanging vines, drink in the fresh air laden with the breath of flowers, listen to the birds as they call to each other from the groves, the drowsy hum of bees, heard but not seen, the chirping of insects, see the delicate, sensitive flowers

that shrink at a touch, frightened at the rudeness, the vines that creep and turn to the light, the great trees with outstretched arms, the quivering leaves that echo the passing breeze, the fields of grass, of grain that undulate like the waves of the sea.

Down from the dusky glen, like the plaintive voice of some lone spirit, come the liquid notes of the hermit thrush. Around us everywhere what wonderful materializations!

What richness and fulness of life! The millions of forms, each selecting, rejecting and appropriating to itself only that which is necessary to its own individuality.

Do you think you can explain these things by attributing them to chemical action, to electricity, to gravitation, to magnetic attraction of particles, or to the evolution of microbes? If so, your credulity has made a fool of you, for you know no more about one than the other.

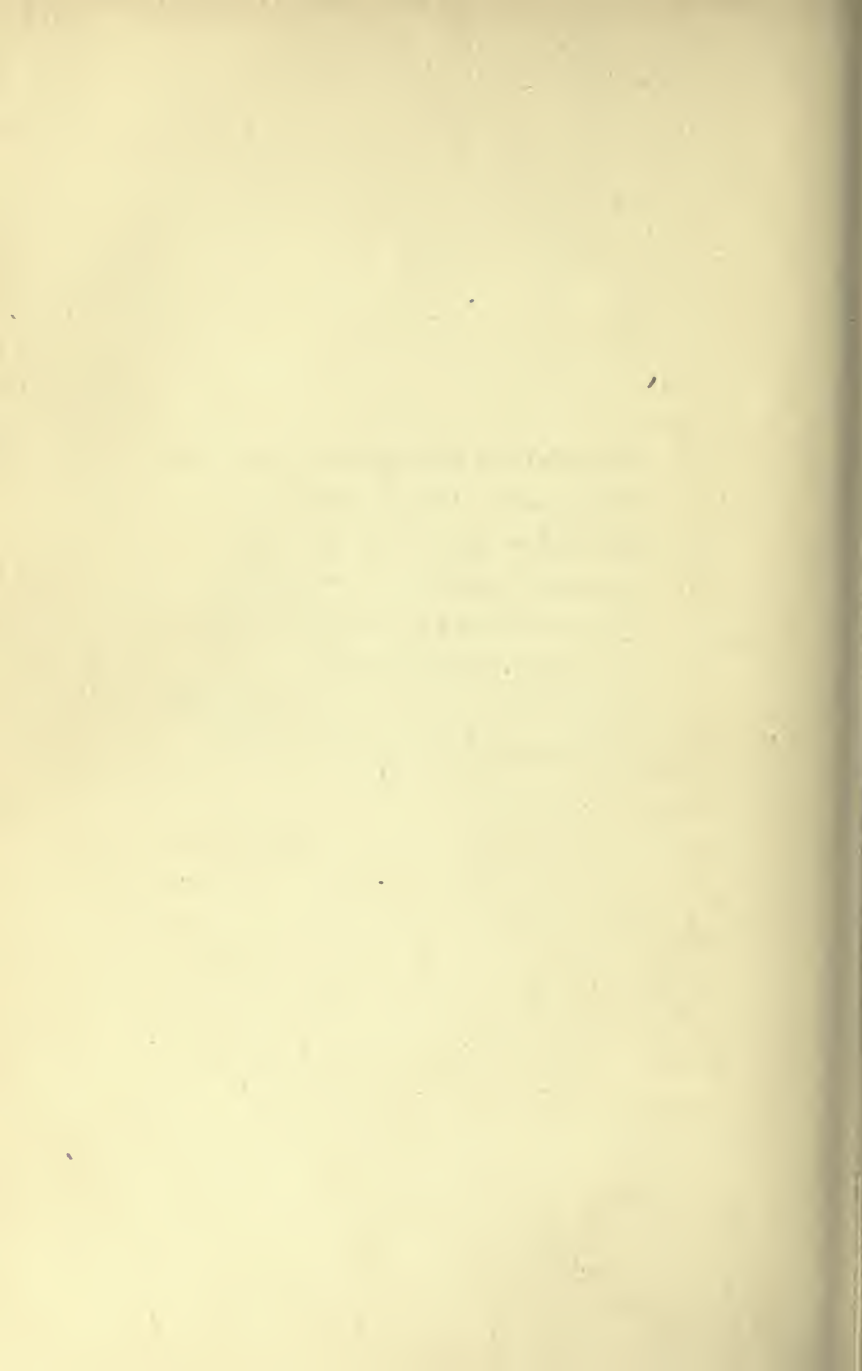
You may greet them with the freshness of childhood or the earnestness that belongs to maturer life, yet you shall not penetrate the Divine Mystery that called them into existence.

Standing on the verge of that change which comes to all, I should feel sad indeed to think that these things, one and all, did not pertain to another life.

Whatever may be your station, your surroundings, the closer you adhere to Nature, the more you realize her simplicity and wonderful beauty, the greater will be your progress, both material and spiritual, and the happier you will be.

In the complete union of soul and body, — the oneness of both, — you realize your relations to the Divine Universe and are open to the unseen intelligences that everywhere surround you, and are fulfilling the mission for which you were sent into the world.

The worthless past still haunts the plain
Of daily life. Foolish and vain
We catch at things that ne'er again
Can have a home in a healthy brain.
With slavish fear and childish dread,
We cling to forms, the ghostly dead,
Whose slow decay and withering blight
Veil from our eyes the coming light.



THROUGH THE AGES

FROM the earliest history down to a comparatively recent date, all nations were controlled by a religious despotism, creating a mental bondage far more degrading than physical slavery.

The Jews, claiming to be the chosen people of God, punished with death the slightest violation of the Mosaic law. Even Greece, with its matchless art and refinement, condemned Socrates to death for speaking lightly of the gods. Rome, with its robust, half barbaric life, was more occupied in conquering other nations than in enforcing her pagan religion; still many suffered for disregarding pagan rites, and few things were undertaken without first consulting the oracles.

It was in the midst of this Roman civilization that there appeared in Palestine a most remarkable man, whose name was destined to go down through all time. Not that he advocated sectarian or church organization, for nowhere did he teach or even suggest anything of the kind, but for his wonderful embodiment of a pure democracy—the brotherhood of man, epitomized in the one sentence—“that ye love one another.” His was the outpouring of a noble nature, which knew no caste nor condition save that of humanity. The common people followed him in crowds, listening to his teachings.

Let it be remembered that his was not the voice of one seeking to relieve them from the misery of another world, for they had no distinct idea of such an existence. It was the hope of a richer and freer life; the escape from a religious despotism that crushed out all individual thought and

action, that swayed his followers. Those who came nearest to him, who understood his pure and affectionate nature, learned to love him with a devotion even to the sacrifice of their lives. Many of the miracles he is said to have performed are repeated at the present time. There is no better description of modern materialization than that recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, where he appeared to them after his death, in a room with closed doors. That his followers understood him is evident from the statement made by St. Paul to the Corinthians, "If I give all my goods to feed the poor and give my body to be burned, but have not love, it availeth me nothing."

Tradition may have thrown around him much that is unreliable, still the essential elements of his character remain unchanged. Nowhere does history record another such remarkable personality.

Amid the despotism of a materialistic age he stands out in clear-cut lines, the representative of all that makes for a better life. Upon the charge of trying to subvert the Jewish religion, he was put to death. Neither his crucifixion nor the horrible slaughter of his followers at Rome served to check the marvellous uprising of the common people.

The priests and rulers, finding that they could not stop it, adroitly turned it aside by establishing a new religion in his name and grafting thereon some of the worst elements of paganism. This church contained nothing of primitive Christianity except the name. Their interpretation of God was degrading. The children He called into existence, and who were not responsible for their own shortcomings, He doomed to eternal misery. They also deified a Devil who vied with the Almighty in the control of the universe.

Not a very honest fellow, for he sometimes took more than his share, but a very convenient scapegoat to bear the sins of a church over which, at times, he appeared to hold complete sway.

Splendid temples and cathedrals came into existence. Bishops, priests, monks and friars sprang up as thick as briars in a deserted field; great, sensuous fellows, who fed on the fat of the land, claiming to be intermediates between God and man, wringing out of heart-stricken humanity the hard earnings of the poor, on the plea that they had power to get the souls of their friends out of purgatory.

Both common sense and reason would suggest that it would be well to determine the existence of such a place before attempting to get any one out of it.

These sensuous representatives of this non-progressive church organization have

come down to the present time. They exist and will continue to exist so long as ignorance and superstition form a part of our boasted civilization.

It is one of the strange things growing out of our artificial life that such fantastic delusions could for a moment be considered as in any way representing the pure and simple teachings of the humble Nazarene.

With the decay of the Roman Empire, the church drifted down into the Dark Ages, no better, and perhaps no worse, than its surroundings.

During this mental gloom that swept over all Europe, there was slowly developed a crude, barbaric sense of freedom (idealized in the character of Robin Hood); a blind groping after a free expression of thought and action, which was destined to change the whole trend of sectarianism.

It is a mistake to attribute the Reformation to Luther. It dates back to the beginning of this barbaric sense of freedom.

When civilization emerged from this long nightmare of degeneracy, due to natural evolution and not to so-called Christianity, a terrible conflict ensued, resulting in the torture and murder of thousands, until the record of sectarian atrocities surpassed that of all other known crimes.

With the subsiding of these horrors and the din of battle, it was found that the Mother Church had been shattered into a hundred different sects, each claiming a vital principle, and warring with each other. But little could be said in favor of the creed of the reformers. They differed but slightly from the Mother Church, but behind them all was an irresistible force, demanding individual right to think and decide; a blind sense of religious freedom.

I have briefly outlined, without detail, the sectarian elements that characterized the so-called Christian Church, showing that the Christ never taught or suggested sectarian organizations; that his mission was of a pure democracy, the brotherhood of man; that the Mother Church contained nothing of primitive Christianity except the name; that nothing could be more widely different; that it enriched itself under false pretences; that it was despotic and tyrannical, degrading alike to God and humanity, and contained within itself the elements of its own destruction.

It was while these loving Christians were cutting each other's throats that Science, comparatively unopposed, advanced on neutral ground and established itself behind a breastwork of unassailable facts. Little by little, year by year it has advanced its pickets until Science, and not

Theology, has become authority. It was a flank movement in the interest of a higher civilization. In its legitimate sphere it is materialistic, dealing only in that which can be proven. Where it steps outside of its limits to speculate and theorize, it ceases to be authority, and becomes the plaything of the imagination.

Scientists dissected, studied, illustrated and explained that splendid machine called man, showing the wonderful adaptability of all its parts; but scientific methods prevented the discovery of its creator, or the engineer who runs it. They assumed that it was evolved from the lower forms of life; that its existence was due to chemical action, or material forces, and when it gave out, death ended all. It was not strange that from their standpoint they should have arrived at such conclusions, but it should be remembered that their theories and speculations were outside of

their limits, and consequently could have no scientific standing.

Man is essentially a religious being, with a blind, instinctive groping after the unknown, with a reactionary element that prompts him to throw out an anchor to the windward, regardless of what it may fasten to.

The great sea of life may swell and throb around him, his intuitions and aspirations may pull and tug at the chains that prevent his progress. His relief comes only when some great disturbance or upheaval pushes him into the open sea.

Between the unassailable ranks of pure science and the fast retreating lines of old theology, there gradually developed a wide space, a mental territory, unoccupied. If it had any character of its own, it was sceptical and atheistical. Under the evolution of natural laws, which must necessarily fill all space with mental and

spiritual forces, this void was open to whatever influence might claim it, provided it was in advance of what had been. It was Nature's method of clearing the ground for a higher development.

Suddenly and without warning there forged to the front a wonderful phenomenon, traces of which had been outlined on the horizon of all nations. It claimed to be an open door between the two worlds; a direct communing with those who once dwelt on this side of life, bearing complete evidence of their identity. It spread with marvellous rapidity over the whole civilized world. During the past fifty years, millions of communications have been received, all purporting to come from the same source.

Individuals may falsify, but such a vast community of liars, so widely separated, where collusion would be impossible, is an absurdity. To-day there is no department

in science better sustained by the accumulation of indisputable facts than is the existence of these manifestations. To deny them is either to impeach the validity of all human testimony, or confess to an unbalanced mind incapable of weighing evidence. These communications came to all. They knew neither caste nor condition. Like primitive Christianity, they were gladly received by the common people whose minds were not preoccupied, whose common sense and sympathy enabled them to approach them in the spirit of kindness so necessary for their full expression.

The fact that these phenomena prove—or claim to prove—a continued existence after what is called death should have entitled them to the careful consideration of every thoughtful mind. On the contrary there was a large class of supposedly educated persons, with minds

crammed with the rubbish of past ages, who treated the whole matter with ridicule and contempt, charging fraud and deception on the part of the mediums, and pronouncing those who accepted these things as little better than fools, and both secular and sectarian press re-echoed the charge until epithets and denunciations fell around them as thick as autumn leaves.

Again, many approached these returning spirits with superstitious reverence, believing that because they came from another world they must necessarily be superior in intelligence and perception to those still dwelling on this side of life. Even if this were true it is no reason why we should surrender our individuality, or dispense with that mental digestion so necessary to a healthy growth. They do not return to relieve us of our obligations and duties here, but to prove their continued existence, their love and affection toward us,

and to point out the only pathway to another life.

We all understand that our mental attitude toward our friends determines our relations with them. The closer we come to them, the more we realize the beauty and simplicity of their lives; and this is especially true in our associations with our unseen friends, who are far more sensitive to mental influence than those dwelling here with minds more or less clouded by materialistic environments. In communing with them we cannot make our own conditions. We must either accept or reject what comes.

The popular idea of applying scientific methods to the investigation of this subject is absurd. It cannot, even with the very best intentions, produce satisfactory results.

A somewhat similar manifestation of the phenomena has existed in India for

thousands of years, where every family is said to have a separate room devoted to communion with their ancestors. Temples are filled with Adepts and virgins, who are supposed to live a severe and monastic life, deriving their support from contributions from the people, and collections obtained by travelling fakirs, whose wonderful performances never fail to attract attention. "They never ask alms; merely accept what is given for the temple to which they belong." They avoid all luxuries, living on fruits and uncooked grain, ignoring as far as possible their material bodies. In their midnight seances, amid clouds of burning incense, wonderful materializations appear and disappear. Whatever may have been their spiritual growth, they have never contributed in any way to the advance of civilization, and so far as a healthy strenuous life makes for a larger man-

hood, they might as well not have existed.

Singular as it may appear, there are many among us at the present time who are charmed with this Oriental non-progressive Spiritualism, either seeking to graft it on to the new or set up a new ism of their own.

It always has been and probably will continue to be the fate of evolution to be obliged to drag after it the dead body of the past.

In what is known as Modern Spiritualism, there is nothing complex or conflicting, unless we choose to make it so by distorting its true meaning.

The wonderful growth of Spiritualism was due to personal experience—to actual contact with the phenomena as expressed through mediums.

There is no one thing in the life of man so vital to the building of a noble

character as a knowledge of his true relation to spirit life. Those who realize this great truth should see to it that it is kept from those tangling and perverting influences by which pure Christianity was deflected from its true meaning, and for a time lost to the world.

The continuance of these manifestations depends upon the hospitality we extend to them, and the mental atmosphere by which we are surrounded. This is not the first time in the history of the world that spirits have sought an audience from those dwelling in material life and been obliged to retire. Already there is an appalling amount of *débris* being heaped around these simple manifestations, emanating from morbid and irresponsible persons, who, having lost their anchorage in the common-sense things of life, have become derelicts, drifting on an unknown sea.

Spiritualism has been hampered in its growth, deflected from its true meaning, perverted in the public estimation by what is equivalent to dime novels and yellow backs in literature, the product of imaginative minds devoid of spiritual perception, seeking only for sensational effects.

The danger to Spiritualism is from within, not from without. It stood unmoved by the assaults of public opinion and only yielded when corruption sprang up in its own ranks, coming from those who claimed to be its friends.

We are supposed to be an emanation from the Divine Intelligence, a part of the Divine Mind. We come into this life pure. To suppose that we return corrupt beings is a step backward, a relic of a barbaric age.

With the decline of the old theological idea of a day of judgment and the resurrection of the body, came a more

reasonable view of another life, the belief that when the spirit leaves the body it enters at once another state of existence, that it has no further use for the body, which is a worn out garment thrown aside.

Laws were made for both
If this is true, by what logic or reasoning can it be assumed that violation of the laws made solely for our material relations in this world will in any way adhere to the spirit, any more than the discarded body? If this cannot be maintained, then the spirit loses in its contact with matter.

and
It is cruel and unjust to charge mediums with what they are in no way responsible for. Death follows birth as certain as night follows day. We hoped, we prayed, with mingled feelings of fear and doubt, that death did not end all. Through these mediums have come the knowledge of a continued state of existence, and an affectionate communion with our departed

friends. These things have been proved by an overwhelming amount of testimony that cannot be impeached.

What must be the quality of that mind which, instead of gratitude and kindly regard toward them, seeks to malign and abuse them! Knowing as I do, from long experience, the tangled and confusing elements that spirits have to encounter in their efforts to communicate with us, I prefer in all cases of apparent failure to suspend judgment rather than to reflect on the character of the medium.

We are so completely surrounded by a mirage that appeals to our outward senses that it is difficult to penetrate beyond it. What we call evil is due to appearances, to a deflection of spirit force in its effort to express itself through material and imperfect organisms. Even through the most perfect embodiment, spirit expression must necessarily be more or less clouded.

In our efforts to reason and draw conclusions from outward manifestations of material life we become the sport of speculation and theories, and live in a sort of delirium in which we hear and see things which have no existence except to our own distorted vision.

Only from within, from our intuitions, from the ever-present consciousness of our divine relations to another life, can we realize our true manhood. It is of the utmost importance, if we desire to get at the truth, that we should not drag Spiritualism down into the baffling elements of crude material life.

The line between sanity and insanity is not always easily determined, for most of us have, stored away in some corner of our brains, a touch of irresponsibility that comes to the surface on a very slight provocation.

Whether your inner self is open to spiritual impressions or not, be true to yourself, not forgetting, however, that self-conceit blinds you to a perception of your true character. Disrobed of all outward appearances, you are no better and no worse than your neighbor.

The changing, shifting mirage of thought, the imaginative and elusive ideas that float through our mental atmosphere, can have no possible connection with true Spiritualism, which springs from the affections and is of no value to us only so far as we realize its simple and beautiful relations to the other life.

The splendor of man is not in bending his energies to some little specialty, thereby dwarfing his other faculties, nor in the dramatic display of his artificial acquirements which will disappear with the decay of his physical environments, nor in the fear or dread of anything, but in the

outflow of his affections, to which all things respond in the fulness and rounding out of an individual life. Spiritualism walks hand in hand with the beauty and simplicity of the true Christ.

In all that makes a healthy life
There is no pomp or jealous strife.
Love rules supreme, and self-conceit
Is crushed like weeds beneath the feet.
We grope about and aimless move
Until our hearts are filled with love ;
Then comes the dawn, the rosy light
That lifts the shadows of the night —
The withered hopes, the ghastly fears
That journey with our waning years.
The pathway to the unseen world
Is full of hope, of joys untold,
With love's rich bloom, with fragrant air,
Unselfish deeds and silent prayer.
Who seeks to climb some other way
Will tarry long, will go astray,
For love alone can point the way.

WE ARE ONE

WE were two and yet we are one. I cannot remember when we were not together. In the springtime of life we walked hand in hand through the green fields and leafy groves, by the running brooks where the flowers bloomed and the birds poured forth their songs of love.

We saw the farmer, robust and strong, cultivating his ground, trusting to a generous return; the wife, peaceful, contented and happy; the children, frolicking on the lawn, and I said, "This is peace; let us stay here." The days, the weeks, the months, came and went. I grew restive, vain and conceited. When I was weary, exhausted or sick, my companion bent over me so tenderly. She was not disturbed

when I said or did things that I ought to have been ashamed of. In fact, I felt at times that it pleased her. She was so far superior to my own wayward disposition, that it hurt my self-love. I was vexed that she took no interest in things that so disturbed and tired me. Had she complained or found fault, it would have been a relief. I would have quarrelled with her, but had not the heart to do so. As I look back on that part of our association, I can see how unmanly and provoking I must have been.

The autumn came; the flowers disappeared, the grass turned yellow, the birds went southward, the brown leaves were falling, the brooks were silent, the children no longer frolicked on the lawn, the farmer had gathered in his crops and retired into winter quarters. I became dissatisfied and sought to avoid the impending change. I said to my companion, "Let

us go — why should we stay here?" She answered, "Where?" and I said, "Anywhere but here."

We drifted to a great city where the river of life seethed and rolled to the great ocean of Eternity. On its surface the débris of untold ages, the foam and scum of artificial life. What poverty, crime, ruin, joy and sorrow lay beneath its terrible surface, I cared not to know. I only sought to get away. Again I said, "Let us go." She answered, "Where?" I said, "To yonder mountain whose hoary head is covered by the fleecy clouds. There must be rest above the thoughtless, changeful current of material life."

Slowly we toiled up its side until we reached the line of perpetual snow and ice. Tired and completely exhausted, I threw myself on the ground. She sat beside me and laid her hand on my brow. For the first time for years I felt a

yearning toward her, a faint glimmer of a changing life.

I heard the creak and grind of the rocks forced aside by the frost. Great boulders, severed from their anchorage, went smoking down the mountain, tearing up the trees at the base. I saw on all sides the warring elements,—the rains, the snows, the frost, were slowly cutting the mountain down; that, in the ages to come, it would disappear. Again I sought to escape all this turmoil and strife.

As I looked down on the plain, I saw mighty armies pitted against each other. I heard the roar of guns, the shriek of shells, the cries and groans of the wounded, the neighing of steeds as they fled riderless from the field and the dead with upturned faces,—here and there with a placid look as if dreaming of loved ones far away. I saw that if man's physical nature was evolved from the brute, there

were times when, through inherited tendencies, he sank below his origin.

I saw that no sooner was a material form brought into existence than all the elements conspired to destroy it. Depressed and humiliated by all I had passed through, I said to my companion, "Is there no escape from these things?" She replied, "Not while the earth remains as it is. This grind, these ceaseless changes are but the evolution to higher forms; the eternal and never varying law of progress leading to a better and clearer expression of the Infinite Intelligence. The birth of the Divine Spirit into material form is not peaceful, but struggling and convulsive, deflected and distorted, in all its outward expression."

On looking back over the past, I found that I had, unconsciously, been trying to create a world of my own; that repose comes only through a cheerful acceptance

of the eternal laws that govern all life. I had drifted away from my companion, whose gentle and confiding nature led her to realize the Divine Intelligence in all these ceaseless changes that had so disturbed me. My pride and vanity had gone. I turned to her and she met me with a face radiant, glowing with confidence and affection. Whatever may have happened to others, she had not changed. I took her hand in mine, threw my arm around her waist and together we went as we had done in the springtime of life. We are one.

Look to thyself. What thou canst see
Is what thou art — a part of thee.
All fraud, all wrong that we call sin,
Or think is so, springs from within.

Our acts are past beyond recall;
Love throws its mantle over all.
Our seeming sins, our faults are due
To baffled thoughts, the spirit's force
Deflected in its outward course.

THE UNKNOWN

It was on February 2, 18—, that my morning mail contained a letter as follows:

“Through our mutual friend S—, I have become interested in you and propose to call on you this evening, about seven o'clock. If not convenient, telephone 43-7.

“(Signed) ARTHUR BURLEIGH.”

The letter was written from right to left, and in order to read it, it had to be held before a mirror. I could recall no one living by that name. In my early days I had a friend by that name who was a great traveller. Sometimes I would not hear from him for two or three years. Finally,

he returned and after a short illness passed to the other world. As I had attended his funeral there seemed to be no possible connection between the two. I was especially puzzled as to who our mutual friend S—— might be.

That morning the sun rose fairly clear and there was nothing to indicate to the casual observer any sudden change of weather. About nine the sky became overcast, the wind suddenly veered to the northeast and by noon there was a blinding snowstorm. Not fleecy flakes, but frozen pellets that, driven by the fierce wind, cut like a sandblast. The streets were deserted, no one venturing out unless actually obliged to brave the storm, which increased in violence.

The wind roared through the leafless trees; the branches swayed and thrashed each other as if in deadly conflict with some unseen foe. There was no moon,

and the night came down in utter darkness. Above the howling of the storm could be heard the shrieks of whistles and the puffing of steam engines, as they advanced to the attack of some defiant snow-drift. The house creaked and shook like a ship tossed by the waves. The snow beat against the window-panes as if they were bombarded with gravel. Several large white-pines back of the house were either stripped of their limbs or broken near the ground, falling with a crash.

I put on my dressing gown and slippers, entered my study, lighted a cigar and sat down in my large armchair in front of a blazing wood fire, thankful that I was protected from the conflict raging without. I cannot say that I was entirely at ease, for my sympathy went out to those who were obliged to contend with the storm.

However exciting anything may be at first, if oft repeated or prolonged, our

sensibilities are dulled and we are lulled into repose. I gradually became indifferent to my surroundings. To the right of my chair was a small table and on it lay Flammarion's astronomy.

When one has nothing else to do he is very apt to turn to reading. Most of us read because we are too lazy to do anything else. We like the sensation of words and ideas passing before us like a panorama, in such rapid succession that none of them have time to make a permanent impression on our minds.

I took up the book and, turning to such parts as particularly interested me, became absorbed in it. How long I read I cannot say, but judge it might have been about nine o'clock when I was startled by a sharp ring at the door bell.

I went into the hall, and unlocked the door, when a sudden gust of wind threw it open, forcing me back against the wall,

while the hall lamp swung back and forth like a signal lantern. On the threshold stood my unknown friend, covered with snow.

He reached out his hand, wet and cold from the effects of the storm, but warm and hearty in its magnetic grasp, saying, "I am glad to meet you."

Brushing the snow from his coat and hat and hanging them on the rack, we entered my study and took our seats before the blazing fire.

Noticing that he held his hand before his face as if the direct rays of light troubled him, I moved a small screen between him and the fire. This gave me a momentary opportunity to study my mysterious visitor. He was tall, broad shouldered, well built and apparently something over sixty years old. His features were regular and mild in expression, his forehead high and somewhat retreating,

his hair and beard long and snowy white, and his voice low and singularly musical.

After a few minutes in which he seemed to be collecting himself, he turned and said, "Perhaps I owe you an apology. It was my only chance of meeting you. Had I known what I would have to encounter I might have hesitated. The train was over an hour late, and when we arrived at your station there was no carriage to be had and no hotel. I asked the agent when the next train would return. He said he hardly thought any trains would start out to-night, as they would be fortunate if they were able to relieve those already stalled on the road. Fortunately a man who had occupied the seat with me heard me mention your name and came forward saying he lived quite near you and offered to pilot me here."

I told him that he was heartily welcome.

This assurance seemed to relieve him and after a short pause he reached over and took Flammarion's book, glanced over it and laid it back asking, "Are you interested in this?"

"Somewhat," I replied. "Have you read it?"

"Not in its present form. I knew the author when he was engaged upon it. Flammarion wrote for the public and did not care to antagonize his colleagues. What he did not write interested me more than what he did write. In my early days I had a taste for astronomy, but not being over pleased with their theories and speculations and having a strong desire to see the world, I gave it up and devoted my time to travel. For more than forty years I have been without a permanent home, and there is scarcely a nation or tribe with which I have not been more or less associated.

“While my object was to study the ethical side of life, I have not been unmindful of what is called civilization, the claim to an advanced condition affecting our relations with each other. If we analyze these claims we find them largely artificial,—that where there has been a gain on one side there has been a corresponding loss on the other. The wars and conflicts of civilized nations show no advance from the brutalities of the savage. The love of display and self-conceit which lead to the assumption of superiority of intellect over the affections is responsible for much that is called civilization. True character is essentially the same everywhere.

“These things interested me only so far as they affected my relations with those with whom I was temporarily residing, my object being to ascertain, personally, as far as possible, the prevailing belief in a future life and the supposed occupations

in that world. There is not time to give you my experience in detail, and I will only allude to two or three instances as typical of all, with one exception.

“The North American Indians all believe in the Great Spirit and a continued life after death. When questioned as to what they expected to find there, the universal answer was, ‘The Happy Hunting Grounds.’ They buried with their dead the implements of the chase, and sacrificed his favorite steed that he might be ready for the chase. As the pursuit of game was necessary to their material existence it will be seen that their conception of another life did not rise above their physical needs.

“The Mahomedan finds the sensuous pleasures of the harem mirrored in his heaven. Among the Christians, who *ideally* worship God, but *practically* the Almighty Dollar, it is the great white

throne, the eternal city paved with gold, enlivened with the monotonous ceaseless singing on the one hand, and on the other, the roasting and broiling of those who are so unfortunate as to be deprived of their share in the golden city.

“Throughout the length and breadth of the world, through every tribe and nation, we find that the idea of another life is based on some peculiarity or custom belonging to this world.

“I spent many years in India, travelling over the greater part of it. Residing a part of the time in Benares, I adapted myself, so far as possible, to the habits and customs of the country, and learned both the Hindu and Sanscrit language.

“This was necessary in order to understand their religion, which in its outward manifestation is nothing but a piece of complicated masking for controlling the common people. This is echoed in the

Catholic church. Both Hindu and Catholic worship is conducted in a language that is not understood by the masses. Both appeal to the outward senses by the use of images and ceremony.

“In the mitre, the robes, the altar, the candles, the images, the burning incense and the use of language unintelligible to the people, we have a form of worship under the name of Christianity that dates back thousands of years before the Christian era.

“The statements of missionaries in regard to the religious life in India are unreliable, as the unfortunate conditions of caste, and the fact that they are there for the avowed purpose of overthrowing the Hindu religion, shuts them out from the inner life, prevents their fraternizing with the best minds of the country.

“It was while residing in Benares that I became greatly attracted to one of the

Adepts attached to the temple. So thoroughly were our feelings in unison that the accident of birth was entirely lost sight of. Whether in the hope that I might be of use to some of our Western people or for some other reason, the usual rules and regulations in regard to the initiation of Neophytes were as far as possible dispensed with, and such spiritual knowledge as I was capable of receiving was freely given.

“It was one of those beautiful moonlight nights, the splendor of which is found only in the Orient, that we wandered through the groves, discussing much of our past experience. He seemed a little disturbed, and more than usually thoughtful. Stopping for a moment, he said, ‘You are going to your Western home, thinking that you can do more good there than here. Possibly that is true. That restless, yearning spirit which belongs to

your race may lead to higher spiritual expression. Take care that you do not lose your anchorage, as so many have done in seeking after the invisible.'

"On our return we sat down on the long flight of steps leading to the Ganges. My friend sat a long time in meditation. Then turning to me, he said, 'Pardon me if I seem severe. You Western people do not understand us. You appear to be a hard, matter-of-fact race. Except through your poets you do not seem to appreciate even the poetic phase of a fact, to say nothing of its spiritual significance.

"'You boast of your better civilization, your inventions, your commerce, your culture of the intellect. All this may be progress, but what you have gained on the one side you have lost on the other. In the love of nature, in spirituality, in that child-like confidence in the Divine Intelligence you are, as a nation, lacking.

“‘ Religion sets lightly on your backs, like Christian’s burden in “ Pilgrim’s Progress.” It is so convenient to carry in that way, for it can be laid down for six days and picked up on the seventh.

“‘ How few among you realize that electricity finds its expression only through a positive and a negative pole; that spirit as an entity, a spark from the divine mind, is powerless to express itself until the polarity between it and matter is established. Once the connection is made it cannot be severed. Conscious individual self is as indestructible as spirit or matter. God is the supreme positive intelligent force, and the material universe the negative body, through which all things are expressed.

“‘ Your scientists blunder in the supposed discovery of evolution. There is no evolution of spirit, it is only the progress of matter toward the invisible. If

you darken a room on a bright day and let in a ray of light, you will see in its path minute particles, whirling and revolving about each other, some glistening like diamonds. What you see is a very small portion of the whole. There are millions that you do not see. Then you realize that you are living in a vast ocean of invisible matter, that four-fifths of all that is needed to sustain your physical system is derived from this source, that the requirement for coarser food decreases in direct ratio to the refinement of your body.

““Scientists have measured the sun and the planets, located their orbits and determined their relative positions, but they have no instrument that enables them to discover, and no eyes to see that what we call earth is a vast planet extending thousands of miles beyond what is supposed to be the surface.

“‘ In the progress of matter toward the invisible, it reaches a stage where gravitation does not act upon it, and instead of falling, the particles rise and come under the universal law of magnetic control.

“‘ From everything, animate and inanimate, these particles are constantly arising to the outer surface of our invisible planet, where, according to the laws of attraction and repulsion, they arrange themselves in their order, producing mountains, plains and valleys,—everything manifested by Nature in crude matter on the visible, central portion or heart of this planet which we call the Earth is duplicated there.

“‘ That supreme, intelligent force which unerringly selects and retains all that is necessary to individual life is always the same, whether in the visible or the invisible world. If you understand that all natural expression of life here finds its counterpart in a more elevated condition

in the other world, that spirit expresses itself in proportion to the refinement of matter it has to deal with, you will have no difficulty in conceiving what your life will be in the other world.

“‘Do not trouble yourself about the creation of the world. There is no proof that it ever was created or that it ever will have an end.

“‘The law of compensation is imperative.

“‘Whatever loss appears to come through the progress of matter toward the invisible is more than made up by the falling of meteoric dust and stones.

“‘Bear in mind always what has been taught you in your initiations. Learn to separate the chaff from the wheat. Nothing is false, all is right, in its place. The chaff is necessary to the grain, though it may not be to you. Everything interblends, you cannot stand alone. All the world contributes to your existence here.

“‘From every part of your body there are constantly thrown off millions of particles of matter so small that no microscope can detect them. They are the result of the pulsation of spirit through matter, your organization accepting only that which is necessary to your individual growth, rejecting all else.

“‘These emanations from your body are magnetically charged with your own personality, apparent to both man and animals, through the sense of smell.

“‘What is true of your own organization is true of every living thing. The air you breathe, everything around you, is crowded with these emanations, you cannot escape them; unconsciously they permeate your whole system. They differ but little from the atoms that compose your body. The spirits can mould them as they please. That which has been rejected by one organization is necessary to the growth of another.

“‘What is called intellect or mind is not spirit or soul. It is the refuse emanations resulting from the union of spirit and matter in the evolution of material individual growth.

“‘Whether you are conscious or unconscious, sleeping or waking, this pulsation of spirit through matter is always present. You are a part of me and I a part of you, and we are a part of everything that is or has been. The whole world is united through evolution and interchangeable particles of matter.

“‘While you maintain your individuality you cannot entirely free yourself from the inherited tendencies of atoms that have passed through other organizations.

“‘They are accountable for the vagaries and hypnotic illusions of earth life, irresponsible mental activities over which personality has lost its control.

“‘No matter what sect you belong to, what form of worship you adopt, whether you are open to spiritual influence or not, your happiness depends on your harmonizing your material and spiritual relations in this life.

“‘You will start to-morrow for your Western home. The dingey is moored at the foot of the steps. The rowers are on board,—everything is as you wished it. The spirits will go with you. In the meantime they would greet you.’

“Stretching out both arms at full length he became rigid, save that only his lips appeared to move as if in prayer; his eyes had a dreamy, far-away look. Slowly there arose before us a phosphorescent cloud through which flashes of light darted in every direction. Low, sweet music filled the air, seeming to come from no one point, but swelled all around us. Through the cloud, vague, undefined forms appeared and

disappeared, gradually growing more distinctly outlined into beautiful beings, some floating, gliding in graceful curves, others, hand in hand, tripping up and down the steps,—all full of joyous life. One, a beautiful female form robed in white with long golden hair, reminding me of my far away home, stepped forward, kneeled before me, threw her arms around my neck and whispered, ‘All is right. I am ever near you. You will attain happiness when you lay aside this perishable body.’

“She vanished, and slowly the whole scene faded away, until to all appearances we were alone.

“The first rays of morning light were streaming up the sky. I bade my friend farewell, descended the steps, went aboard the dingey and as the sun broke over the horizon we cast off the moorings and drifted down the Ganges. Half an hour later the beautiful city of Benares with its

spires, its pagodas and its minarets, had faded from my sight."

As he paused there came several sharp raps on my table, and, looking round, I saw standing behind my guest's chair the beautiful female he had described, resting one hand on his shoulder and with the other pointing to a photograph of a child that hung on the wall directly in front of us.

Suddenly the picture began to swing like the pendulum of a clock. The figure vanished, but the photograph continued to swing for some time. It attracted the attention of my visitor. As he gazed at it he said, as if speaking to himself, "Our mutual friend."

As the fire was low and we were drifting into the small hours of the night, I suggested that we retire and resume our talk the next day. I conducted him to a large, comfortable chamber in my forest home, placed a lamp on the table, threw

some towels over the pitcher, and as I bade him good-night he said, "I have an engagement at nine; if possible, I should like to keep it." I replied, "We have breakfast at seven; that will give you ample time to reach the city before nine."

I rose at six and requested the best breakfast the house afforded. There was great curiosity to see my visitor.

A quarter of an hour passed and nothing was heard from him. I went up to the chamber and rapped on the door, but gained no response. I rapped again. Still no reply. I opened the door. The lamp was still burning, the towels still lay across the pitcher, the bed had not been occupied.

I descended to my study. There were the chair and the screen as I had placed them the night before. The storm had abated before daylight. There were no tracks leading either to or from the house.

Think not that when the waning light
Of evening fades and blinds thy sight
That all is wrong, or aught impure;
The white light only shall endure.



I **AM** the light that lifts the darkness,
the dawn that gilds the hill tops with gold,
the pearly dew that drenches the earth,
the painted flower in all its splendor, filled
with matchless odor.

I am the bird that calls all day to his
mate, the young girl with lithe form, flow-
ing hair and moist eyes, resting on her
couch and dreaming of a larger life.

I am the mother watching her babe cooing and stretching its little limbs, conscious of a new existence.

I am the stalwart man fighting the elements, cleaving his way to nobler manhood, the wan pilgrim standing at the gateway of another world.

I am the sailor fearlessly treading the deck amid the creaking timber and the howling storm.

I am the war, the pestilence, the famine that sweeps the earth, gathering in the harvest that those who come after may have room.

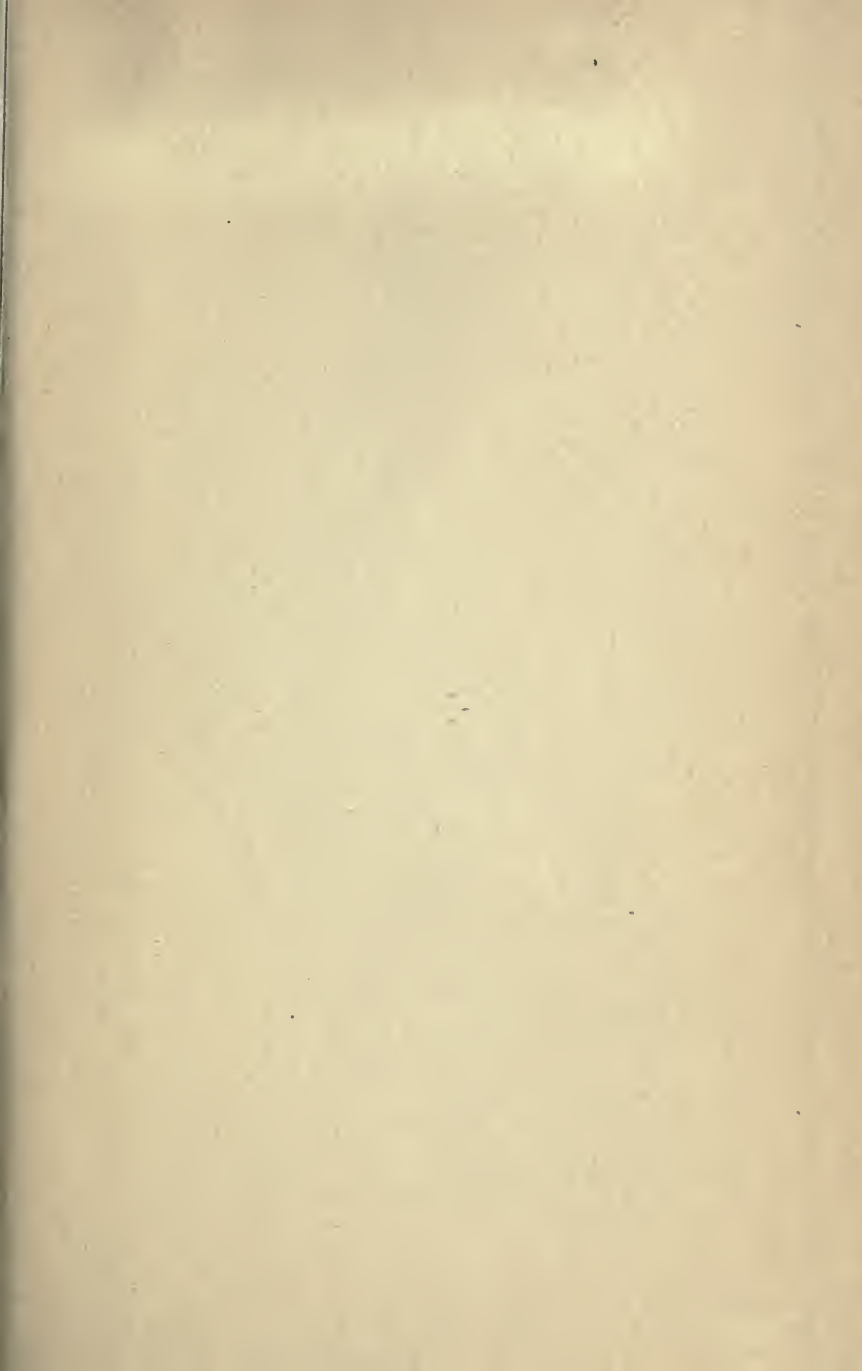
I am the tempest and the whirlwind; the calm; the builder of mountains; the whirling atoms; the revolving world and great sidereal universe.

I am the rich, the poor, the high, the low, the love, the affections, the joys and the sorrows of life. I am the finite and the infinite. I know neither time nor space.

I am the Supreme Intelligence from which all things flow. In the upheaval of crude matter there are no accidents, no discord. Everything moves on, always advancing, never receding.

In the fulness of my attributes all things have their being. To those who understand me all things are possible. Without me there is nothing.

I am All in All.



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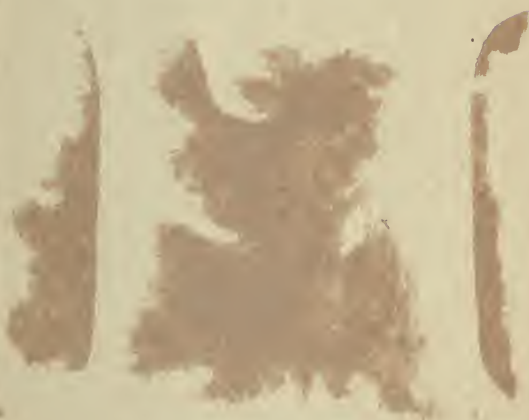
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